

Handwritten: London for Mr. H. 1755
Handwritten: and Interiors containing
MEMOIRS

Handwritten: Sheets of paper Duty Seven Shillings
OF THE

Handwritten: No 54
VOLUPTUOUS CONDUCT

OF THE

Handwritten: The Capt.
CAPUCHINS

In Regard of the FAIR SEX:

REPRESENTED

In a Variety of CURIOUS SCENES,

Exhibited to Public View by a Brother of the Order,

Translated from the FRENCH.

Handwritten: Ausus
Detrabere et pellem, nitidus quod quisque perora
Cederet, introrsum turpis. *Hor.*

LONDON:

Printed for J. RAYMOND. M.DCC.LV.

[Price One Shilling.]

Handwritten: 22 Nov 1755 Lewis Sh. H. H.

Handwritten: by Andrew Gordon Wm. Poole

MEMOIRS

OF THE

VOLUNTARIES CONDUCT

OF THE

CAPTAINS

In Regard of the Fair Sex:

REPORTED



The Young of the Fair Sex

Illustrated to Public View by a Portrait of the Queen

Translated from the French

By J. RAYMOND, Esq. of the Inner Temple, Barrister at Law.
LONDON: Printed and Sold by J. RAYMOND, at the Sign of the Crown, in St. Paul's Church-yard.

LONDON:

Printed for J. RAYMOND, M.D.C.C.LV.

[Price One Shilling.]

MEMOIRS, &c.

HOW often does the Face present deceitful Images! The exterior Disposition of Body is not always the faithful Interpreter of the Heart. It is no difficult Matter to conceal prophane Inclinations, under the Garb and Affectation of religious Appearances. Nothing so common now a-days, as Persons in Masquerade: But if all, more, or less, have recourse to this Stratagem, it suits none so well as those who seem to renounce the World, yet, under a penitential Habit, cherish the Love of Pleasures, which they have voluntarily declared themselves against. Among these Sholes of Monks, that professedly

B

fessedly wear the Mask, the *Capuchins* use it so advantageously, that, by the specious Disguise of this hypocritical Veil, these Satyrs cover infamous Passions, and impose upon the undiscerning Part of Mankind by exalted ideas of Moderation, which is the Object of their Contempt. This counterfeit Moderation is so useful to them, that by it they have found Admittance to numberless Persons of both Sexes, whose Consciences they manage as they please; and by this Means, those Dupes receive with such Submission from these dextrous Savages, Rules for regulating their Conduct in Life, that they really believe a virtuous Action must degenerate into one very criminal, unless they held from them the Manner of putting it in Execution. If there is no Difficulty in describing the Apparatus of this Masquerade, which is nothing else but coarse Cloth, of a darkish Colour, Sandals, a pale Visage, and of a leaden Hue, a venerable Beard, and a grave Composure; it is not so easy to form an Idea of its secret Virtues. For not to speak of the Impressions it gives of an austere and penitential Life, which has a powerful Ascendant over Minds, it communicates the Confidence of committing with Impunity all Crimes, and even of cutting Purfes with the Approbation of those, who have been



been thus plundered. The Apes of the poor St. *Francis* receive this Liberty with the Capuchinal Equipage. They excel in the Art of employing it successfully ; an Art, of which none as yet have bethought themselves to give the Public a proper Information.

As I had sufficient Insights to discover the scandalous Life of these Hypocrites, I will endeavour to unmask their Imposture, in order to undeceive those who are blind enough to be led aside by Appearances, and who, by the Benefits they heap upon them, serve to confirm them in their wicked Dispositions. I lived long enough among them, to speak knowingly of the principal Subtilties of these Cheats, and I would not have seen myself unhappily obliged to finish in their Society the Remainder of a melancholy Life, had they not stripped me, on my embracing their Institute, of the little Fortune that escaped my Debau-cheries, to be laid out in the adorning of one of their Churches, tho' as well vers'd in the Intrigues of the Wallet, and Confident of the first of the Order, I might have lived in their Convents in an Affluence of Sweets and Tranquility.

It would have been much more to the Advantage of our venerable Hypocrites, had they suffered me to spend my Life according to the Dictates of Simplicity, without creating me Alms-gatherer to their greatest Convent in *France*. 'Tis true, I was well cut out for this Trade. I was destin'd to the Exercise of this important Ministry, in which, under the Direction of Brother *Felix*, whom I may call the mask'd Capuchin, or the Father of Cheats, I learn'd the Intrigues of Capuchinagism. I was formed by the Hand of this good Politician, whom I succeeded in the Office of first Alms-gatherer, or Grand Foster-father of the House.

I never did any Thing but by the Order of this Grand-man. He read me Lectures upon every Thing I was to transact. I called at all the Houses that were in my Catalogue, carrying a huge Bottle in my Hand, a Wallet before, and a Wallet behind; all were eager to load me, and every Quarter of an Hour I was obliged to disburden myself of Bread, Meat and Wine, at the several Abodes of certain female Devotees, of which we had a good Number in every Quarter of the Town. Brother *Felix* troubled himself only twice in the Year,

Year, to visit those on whom we depended for our Subsistence. It was then that he composed the Air of his Countenance, that he affected to appear mournful and dejected, and that he put on the Mask of Hypocrisy. He scarce had exchanged three Words with any of our Benefactors, when he began to describe the Extremity our Community was reduced to, and this in so affecting a Manner, which he accompanied with Tears, that there were very few who were not sensibly moved, and consented to have their Names inserted in the Catalogue for that Year, that they might be Partakers of the continual Prayers, which he assured them were offered both Day and Night for their temporal and spiritual Welfare.

He was acquainted with all the Commissaries of *Paris*, and had the Secret to bring them all over to his Interest, that the Confiscation of Bread, and other Things, so frequent in that City, might devolve to us; for which Purpose, he seldom failed to protest, that very often, for want of Victuals, we were necessitated, on entering our Refectory, or Hall, to say *Grace before and after Meat*, both together.

It

It was my Duty, when his Visit was over, to trace the Footsteps of this devout Brother, with a Copy of his Catalogue, and to ransack all Parts for Belly-timber. We amassed three times as much as we had an Occasion for, tho' in *Paris* alone, our Number amounted to upwards of three hundred lazy Drones, in four Convents of the same Order; so that three Servants and two Mules could scarce suffice to transport what I had walleted three times in the Week.

On Days the Market was not held, I made a Provision of Kitchen Utensils, such as Kettles, Pots, Cauldrons, &c. I even got in as much Bacon and Spice in two Days, as would serve the Year round.

This Day, I was in quest of Leather for Sandals, Thread, Linnen-cloth for Towels, Napkins, Handkerchiefs and Drawers; and the next Day, for Wool, Candles, Oil, Vinegar, Nails, Cord, Gardening-tools; in fine, for every Article that could in any Respect be deemed necessary.

Every Thing had its own Repository; I had little separate Chambers, which were as so many Warehouses, and might well dispute

dispute it with the best furnished Shops in Town.

I could alledge many other Particulars, as Proofs of the ingenious Poverty introductive of such great Opulence among the Capuchins; but as what I have declared is, it seems, sufficient for forming adequate Notions of their Hypocrisy, I will wave this Discourse, to enter upon another, which regards, not so much the Privation of our Neighbour's Goods, as the Loss of his Soul and Honour.

Having spent four Years in the Convent in Quality of Alms-gatherer, I made my humble Supplications to the Father Provincial, that he would be pleased to discharge me, as well upon Account of the Fatigues I underwent, loving a little my Repose, as through the Consciousness of the Ruin of my Soul, by practising an Exercise so contrary to Virtue, and to which one cannot justly give any other Name, but that of Impostor.

This Reverend Father granted my Request, and appeared to me well satisfied with the exact Account I laid before him of whatever I had transacted. He made me his extraordinary Companion, and promised,

misf, I should do nothing for the future, but what my own Will suggested. I accepted with Pleasure this new Degree, without foreseeing the fatal Consequences that were to befall me: The Father Provincial did not in the least surmise, that by being his Companion, I should discover with as much Ease the licentious and debauched Life they lead, as the several Cheats of their false Poverty.

My Eyes have been Witnesses of their infamous Actions; I could never have thought that Capuchins had lived so abandoned a Life, and I could not persuade myself that Persons, whom I formerly regarded as Angels in human Form, were Traitors to their Friends, Whore-mongers, Adulterers; in short, were the most pernicious Instruments the Devil uses to place Souls on the Precipice of eternal Damnation.

Their Desires are not regulated by a fixt Quantity; and though the least of Sensualities be a great Crime in them, they confine not their Desires to the Possession of one Object alone. The Daughter of a devout Woman, the Wife of a Friend, an Intrigue at the Grate of a Nunnery, even an entire Convent of Nuns, are not capable

ble to fet Bounds to their Whoredoms, Adulteries, and Sacrileges. All they lay their Hands on, are so many Objects of their Lust, and this hankering Desire after Concupiscence plainly shews that they have the Inclinations of Satyrs and He-goats as well as the Beard.

Though it be difficult, upon Account of the Care they take to conceal their Faults, to give an ample Description of their Manner of proceeding, I shall notwithstanding endeavour to paint it in faithful Colours, according to the Extent of my feeble Genius, and the several Lights my Imagination can spread about the Matter. I will therefore speak of the Means and Artifice they employ to suborn the female Sex, with whom they entertain a pretty close Commerce, and the Stratagems of many of the Confraternity for decoying the Wives of their Friends, when these poor Creatures were not satisfied with their Husbands nightly Performances.

It will be unnecessary to make a Narrative of the Course of their Studies, and the secret Instructions given them by their Ancients, to guard against Surprise in their amorous Intrigues; so much the more, as this belongs not to my Subject, the Effects,

I intend to describe, leading naturally to the Knowledge of the Causes; wherefore my Discourse shall begin with the Time they are admitted to the Degree of Preacher, as then they strive to sue for the Pulpit of some Parish. When they have preached during a Lent, or an Advent, they fail not to muster up a pretty Acquaintance. They take upon themselves to become Directors of Consciences; and from spiritual Fathers, easily transform themselves into corporal, by means of the Knowledge they acquire touching the Inclinations of their Penitents, whom in the Beginning they content themselves in desiring to resort to their Confessionaries; but afterwards, having obtained a more particular Ascendant over their Minds, they pay them Visits, because upon the Footing of Directors, they are granted Leave to go out when they please, and to choose for their Companion some good-natured Brother, who has no Aversion against Pleasure, who will be glad to share in their Diversions, and whom they thus influence to keep their Secrets.

When they go a visiting, they are extremely careful that their Crown be neatly adjusted, their Beard well combed and crisped, and their Hands very clean. They wash their Legs and Thighs with odoriferous

ferous Herbs, put on clean Drawers, shave off the Hair of their Legs, though our Constitutions prohibit the Use of a Razor; they have perfumed Handkerchiefs, and they carry about with them Motto-rings and Seals, Pocket-books, Cases of Instruments, Cizzars, and other Trifles, to make Presents of to the young Ladies.

If they go into a House where there is a handsome Maid, Relation, or Daughter; if the Bigot of the House be advanced in Years, or scrupulous, they conduct her near a Bed-side, into a Closet, or Anti-chamber, to examine her Conscience, whilst the Father's Companion tampers with the Fair one's Inclinations.

Should this Director meet with a pliable Object, and susceptible of amorous Sentiments, he will tell her Stories that favour her Inclination. Is she disposed for a devout Life, he will make her a Present of Beads, *Agnus Dei's*, and other silly Implements of Devotion? If her Temper loves Gallantry, and curious Toys, he gives her Motto-rings and Seals, Table-books, and such like; but if he perceives she is enamoured of the Pleasures he himself is in quest of, he boldly claps into her Hand the Sum of her Wishes.

Whenever these Hypocrites chance to light on a gay, free Humour, their Licentiousness becomes unbounded, they are regardless of all Decorum in Speech; and as, through the Channel of Confession, they know the Bottom of these Women's Hearts, they easily insinuate themselves, and obtain all they desire.

If there happens to be a Husband who esteems them, as being his Directors, they will watch their Time of going to the House, when he is out of the Way, and will lavish Encomiums on the laudable Intentions the Master harbours in Behalf of his Family, and his ardent Desires for having it grow rich in virtuous Sentiments.

If, on the contrary, they find that a Woman is dissatisfied with her Husband, and that she prays them to bring him over to a better Course of Life, they promise her that they will exert their utmost to cause a thorough Reformation in him; and should they perceive that this Family stands in need of their kind Offices, they make themselves more familiar, rise, and walk about the Chamber, take off their Cloaks, sit at the Fire, near which if there be an Object that charms them, they

they raise up their Gowns, shew a white and well-proportioned Leg, and sometimes the Thigh, with a Design, no Doubt, to tempt Flesh by Flesh.

During these first Visits they usually take not too great a Latitude. They only promise that they will come and give an Account of what they have, or may effect on the Mind of the Father, or Husband. Each conjures them to it, and it is with Regret they are suffered to depart.

On meeting with some female Bigots inclined to Vice, which they know from their Confessions, they abuse their Weakness, and make their Declarations instrumental to procure their Confidence; so that Confessionaries, established solely for reclaiming Sinners from Vice, are by them converted into Schools of Impurity, and Places of Rendezvous for receiving amorous Assignations. From this Place Souls ought to depart pure, and cleansed from all Filthiness; but they unhappily depart replete with Corruption, and they repair to private Houses of Debauchery, where they are appointed to meet these Hypocrites, who, under the Pretext of Piety, having a free Access there, and devoid of all Suspicion, plunge themselves into infamous Crimes,

Crimes, that cannot be recited without
Horror.

They hold Assemblies, to give mutual Advice, with regard to the best Measures that can be concerted for contenting their Luxury, without exposing themselves to the Danger of being discovered; and having no other Views but those of their Lubricity, they introduce themselves into honourable Houses, from whence they extract the Means, which they put to a profane Use, contrary to the Intention of those thus grossly abused by these wicked Varlets, who are assiduous in representing to them that they act purely through a Motive of Charity, and who notwithstanding distribute, or cause to be distributed, these very Alms among infamous Pimps and Procuresses, whom they make use of as the principal Managers of their criminal Pleasures.

But what favours most the Depravity of their Hearts, are the Days of solemn Festivals, wherein an Abundance of devout Women present themselves at their Feet, to confess their Faults, and bring along with them their Daughters, Nieces, or Relations. Then it is that the Sentence of their Iniquity is passed on these innocent Souls, which they examine with a particular

cular Care. If they discover them susceptible, or addicted to carnal Temptations, they bid them endeavour to suppress these criminal Thoughts, till such Time as they can conveniently see them in their Houses, because the Number of Persons whereby they are then harassed and over-burdened, permits them not at that Juncture to prescribe salutary Remedies, but that they are confident, when they visit them, they shall be in a Condition to impart unto them all necessary Instructions for their Salvation, and to confirm them so in Virtue, as to dread no more the Attacks of the Enemy.

These young Souls, which Age seems not capable to exempt from such Temptations, wait with Impatience the Arrival of their Confessors, hoping to find by them some consolatory Support for their infirm Consciences: The Confessors fail not to come to the House, and if there are no Wounds to cure, the Conversation is on holy Things, provided the Woman be scrupulous; if not, they strive to bring her over to their Party, and make her comply with their Will.

Should a young Virgin, as it sometimes happens, apply to them for some wholesome Advice, to divert the ill Thoughts
that

that arise in her Mind ; they take her aside, tell her that she must not be shameful before them, that they know how natural it is for Women to experience like Sensations ; but that they have certain and easy Remedies for their Cure. It is then that they steal upon the Secrets of their Hearts, and by making an artful Use of the Information they extorted, obtain easily what they wish for, because they keep their Minds in Dalliance with these Thoughts, than which nothing affords such exquisite Delight to Youth ; and on the other Hand, Fear, the natural Consequence of the Declaration of their Weakness, compels them to an unreserved Compliance, lest a Discovery should unveil their Shame. Thus it is that those poor Creatures fall a Prey to these Wolves, who have so much thirsted after their Honour, and who rehearse faithfully among themselves their good Hap, that they may procure for each other the Pleasure of Change.

A very intimate Friend once related to me an Adventure, which happened to the Father he accompanied, and the Stratagem he used for obtaining his Desires with a Lady of a considerable Family. He brought me, said he, to a House where he promised the Wife to oblige the Husband

to

to abide by his Directions. He took her into a Place where he could not be seen by any of the Domestics, and putting on the Cloke of Hypocrisy, he pretended he had seen her Husband, tho' in Reality he had not spoke to him, and said to her, I am astonished that so devout a Man as your Husband could have entertained Sentiments so prejudicial to his Family ; but if you are willing to promise me by Oath to reveal nothing of what I may inform you, I will propose to you certain Methods for establishing your Repose. She swore to whatever he was pleased to dictate ; for an irritated Woman will give into any Engagement, more especially on seeing others ready to espouse her Quarrel.

I counsel you, Madam, said he, to renounce all Regard for him, to withdraw your Tenderness, and to treat him with all possible Rigour. He is a Man, who, under an hypocritical Veil, seeks nothing so much as your Destruction ; his Conscience even is ulcered to the Degree of having accused himself in Confession of a Design to poison you. I had all the Trouble imaginable to make him relinquish this pernicious Design ; and you should be upon your Guard, lest one Day or other he might resolve upon putting it in Execution.

D

This

This Woman, otherwise animated against her Husband, spurted Fire and Flames, vented a thousand Invectives against him, and protested she would scruple nothing to be revenged of him. I should be to blame, said he, if I undertook to mitigate your Resentment; I find it so just, that I would willingly myself lend a helping Hand to compleat your Revenge: For, continued he, can there be a more cruel Usage than his to you, who art a beautiful Woman, of a neat and elegant Frame of Body, and endowed with the rarest Qualities desirable in the Sex? How many Women are there whose Virtue could not withstand so rude a Trial, and who would not be blameable to seek in a sweet Vengeance the Punishment of his Faults? Yes, Madam, I know several, who far from being so reserved, would treat him as their Resentment suggested, and when even they should come to me to make their Declaration, I would be more ready to serve them in, than dissuade them from it. This Woman seeing herself seconded in this Manner, asserted her former Virtue and Fidelity, said that she had always behaved herself with all the Chastity and Modesty possible; but that for the Time to come she would set aside all Sorts of Considerations, and would no longer keep any Measures; that she was
now

now upon the Terms of acting as she pleased, and that only an Opportunity was wanting to her Design; that it was a Year and upwards since he had meddled with her, but that she would enjoy with another the Sweets she could not taste of with him. The Cheat was careful not to let so favourable an Occasion escape him; he gently in the Beginning assuaged her Rage with pernicious Examples, which he rendered apposite to his Subject, and thus in the Sequel smoothed for himself the Road in which he would fain conduct her.

By adding Fuel to Fire, he so animated her, that seeing her touch upon the Point desired, he declared that for a considerable Time he had adored her in all the secret Powers of his Soul, without having till that Day dared to avow unto her his Passion; and that it seemed that Heaven was favourable to his Love, by blessing them with that happy Moment: He conjured her not to delay his Happiness, that his Character was a certain Mark of his Discretion, and that she should receive from him Proofs of so passionate a Tenderneſs, that he was confident she would have good Reason to be satisfied. At the Close of these Words, pronounced with an extreme Ardour, he was eager to proceed to Execution, and

embraced the Lady, who recovering a little her Spirits, said, that she did not think that a Monk had Desires so contrary to what he taught. Ah! Madam, answered he, how slenderly you are acquainted with the Force of Love! Think you that is in the Power of a Man to resist it! No, Madam, continued he, charging her Home, you must not regard the Friar in me, but a faithful and sincere Lover, who makes his only Good consist in your Possession. These tender Words surprized her; she beheld in the Friar's Eyes Testimonies of an extraordinary Ardour, and the Desire of Revenge joined to the Sweets she hoped to relish in his Embraces, made her comply with the Will of her Husband's Director, who persevered for a long Time in this Course of Life, and always fomented Disorder in this Family, to glut by a most crying Adultery his Impurities.

One may be a competent Judge by this Example how these Libertines in Masquerade conduct themselves; they aim at nothing so much as the Destruction of Families, to convert to their Advantage the Divorces and Ruptures they occasion in them, by the corrupting of Women. However, they are not always successful. Sometimes they bring themselves into great
Scrapes,

Scrapes, of which the following Relation would have been an undoubted Testimony, had not the Prudence of a Commissary hindered the Ignominy from spreading upon, and disgracing the whole Order.

A Preacher, whose Companion chanced to be in the Country, asked me to keep him Company for one Day only. I was granted him, and we left the Convent in the Morning, after having breakfasted. He paid some Visits to different Friends, and the last was at the House of a considerable Citizen, where we found his Wife in a Negligee-dress, but so neat and pretty, that she could beget a Warmth in the most insensible. Upon our Arrival she affected to be somewhat reserved, not knowing my Face: But the Father having told her I was his Friend, she resumed her usual De-meanour, which was the most graceful, sprightly, and gay, that one could wish for. She told him that she was under some Apprehension of his not coming that Day, because her Husband was to return in the Evening, and that she had expected him with Impatience. The Father replied, that in Reality he had like to have fallen short of his Promise; and that had not he found as faithful a Friend as I was, he might have had some Difficulty in resolving to come; which

which made me judge that there was some Intrigue at the Bottom.

After a short Conversation, Dinner was served: We were four at Table; for Madam's Chamber-maid was pleased to be seated, and being of her Mistress's Humour and Disposition, I conjectured that probably she might fall to my Lot.

We dined handsomely: There was excellent Wine in great Abundance, and good Cheer was not spared. When our Treat was at an End, I was surprized to see my Preacher lay his Cloak upon the Chairs, and take the Lady in such Manner, as sufficiently convinced me, there was a great Familiarity between them. He transported her into a Closet at a small Distance, where there was a Bed of Repose very neat, and very fit for the Purpose, and left me sitting by the Fire with the Maid, who appeared to me younger and more beautiful than the Mistress. But I was so seized with Fear, tho' Nature solicited my Approaches to this amiable Girl, who waited to receive my Caresses, that I remained in a Corner, without daring even to lift up my Eyes; and I verily believe I should have remained in this stupid Situation, had not my pretty Miss perceived my weak Side, and made the

the first Advances, by a Smile inexpressibly sweet, which notwithstanding would have proved ineffectual, had not she also, to rescue me from that silly Shame that kept me so backward, thrown her Arms about my Neck, and said, in wantonly embracing me: What, Brother, shall we remain unactive, whilst others enjoy the most ravishing Sweets of Love? These Words roused me from my lethargic Fit, I clasped her in my Arms, laid her on the Bed, and there, regardless of my Vows, I infringed the most sacred Law of religious Perfection.

Some natural Necessity having called me down Stairs, I heard a knocking at the Door, and not being willing to give my Fair-one the Trouble to come down, I ran to open it: Unhappily, it was the Master of the House, whom I did not know: He saluted me, saying, Good Day! Brother: Why have you troubled yourself to open the Door for me? In speaking these Words he went up to his Chamber, opened the Closet-door, where he found the Father and his Wife asleep, who rested themselves from the Fatigues they underwent in mutual Embraces, and lay in a Posture that very well figured what had been the Fore-runner of their Sleep. He shut the Door softly,

softly, for fear of awaking this loving Couple, and having walked twice about the Chamber, he asked me, what Business I had there, and how long I had been in the House? I was thunderstruck by the Alteration I remarked in his Face; and the Maid having answered that we were only just come in; You shall not remain here long, said he, and I will soon make you change your Lodging. He looked out of the Window, called to a Cobler, his Neighbour, and prayed him to go and fetch a Commissary, who lived hard-by. The Commissary being arrived, he threw him out the Key from the Window, remaining himself with us in the Chamber, to hinder the Commissary from being prepossessed, or from awaking the sleeping Pair. The Commissary having entered the Chamber; Sir, said he, I know that Spells and Charms are of no Efficacy against Justice; 'tis therefore I sent for you, to apprehend a Sorcerer, who assumed my Resemblance, under the Habit of a Capuchin, to enjoy my Wife; I am too well persuaded of her Virtue, to believe that she could, without being deceived, do any Thing contrary to her Honour; and, on the other Side, I cannot believe that this is a real Capuchin, because they are a Set of People too good and too honest to be guilty of such Actions.

Let

Let us, if you please, strive to clear up this Mystery; so speaking, he opened the Door, and made our Lovers shake off their drouzy Nap.

The Commissary was strangely surpriz'd, on finding that the Capuchin was his Nephew; and the Nephew was not less so, on seeing his Uncle; but what could equal the Woman's Confusion, when she saw her Husband, who had surprized her in that Equipage.

The Commissary, a Man of Wit, was on this Occasion of vast Assistance to us. What, said he, Sir, addressing himself to the Husband, is it thus Folks make a Mockery of Justice? You deserve that I should make you feel the Effects of my Resentment, for obliging me to come to your House, with the Intent of making me the Object of your Raillery. If some Considerations did not withhold me, I certainly would make you suffer; and you Fathers, said he, turning to us, I am astonished that you could have consented to follow the Counsels of this discreet Master of the House to engage in an Enterprize of this Nature; you deserve that I should take this Feint for a Reality: But the Veneration I have for those of your

E Order,

Order, makes me postpone the Regard I should have for my Honour and Interest, otherwise I would commit you all three to the *Châtelet*, where you would be answerable for the little Respect you have shewn for a Person invested with a Charge of such Consequence as mine. The Capuchin knowing the ingenious Cunning of his Uncle, made a Shew of asking his Pardon, that he did not think he would have taken the Thing in that Sense, and that he imagined he would be the first to laugh at the Adventure.

The Husband swore and protested with execrable Oaths, that it was not Raillery, that he came from the Country, and that he found them in Bed together; but his Oaths and Protestations were to no Purpose, the more he persisted in averring what he advanced, the more we, with the Commissary, were obstinate in alledging the contrary; so that we got safe out of the House, the Commissary pretending to reprimand us for our Indiscretion, and loading with Reproaches the Husband, and desiring him for the future to be more circumspect in his Conduct, and not think of making such a Dupe of him another Time, upon Pain of rigorous Treatment. He left him with his Wife, who was some Time after

after sent to the Convent of *Madelonnettes*, or of the penitent Nuns: For our Part, we returned together to the Convent, after having rendered a thousand Thanks to our Deliverer, and earnestly prayed him to keep Secresy.

Since this Adventure, which, it seems, ought to have deterred me from Visits of this Kind, I let no Opportunity slip me of embracing the same with Joy, so powerful are carnal Pleasures over Youth. Certain it is, I was excited to this by the same Preacher, who related to me all his Intrigues, and informed me of those carried on by upwards of twenty of our Fathers, who admitted me as their Confident and Companion in several fortunate Rencontres.

By their Means I always found my amorous Enterprizes easy in the Execution, without ever being expos'd to other Danger, than on the Day I mentioned, and I never met with any Resistance in the Houses where I accompanied them; which convinced me that all the bigotted Women and their Families passed through our Hands, and that our Fathers disposed their Minds to consent to all they wished for, because as often as I had been with them, I found the Ad-

vances made, having only to take without asking; which made me judge that they spoke for me; and indeed, I stood much in need of their Assistance, being neither a Preacher, a Gallant, nor bold.

But if Cities are favourable to their Intrigues, the Country is not less so, by reason of their easy Reception into Houses of Persons of Quality, and those of the most considerable Citizens, who take Pleasure in entertaining them, little imagining that they afford Shelter to a Demon of Lubricity, who aims at, under an hypocritical Appearance, the Imbezzlement of their Wealth, the corrupting of their Souls, and the Loss of their Honour.

My first Journey was about ten Leagues from *Paris*, in Company with our Provincial and his Secretary. We lay on the Way at a Gentleman's House, who had a very beautiful Wife, and a young handsome Sister. We arrived there about Two o' Clock, and were at first regaled with a Collation equivalent to a very good Dinner. As it was in the Month of *June*, and the Heat intense, we remained in the Chamber to keep ourselves cool, till the Sun being almost ready to go down, our Fathers were pleased with the Fancy of going to say their
Bre-

Breviary in a tufted Grove at the Bottom of the Garden ; and for this Purpose they left the Ladies in the Chamber, who were at Work in Tapestry, whilst the Master of the House retired to his Closet, to attend a few private Affairs, and write some Letters.

Before letting the Fathers go out, they thought of ordering Supper. The Cook was sick, and we were in Danger of having nothing but what the Spit could furnish, had not the Provincial, who was not less dainty-mouthed than amorous, told Madam, that I was well versed in Affairs of Cookery ; upon which she immediately requested, I would be pleased to make a Pidgeon-pye, and a Fricassie of Chickens. I willingly embraced the Office, went down to the Kitchen, and spread a Napkin before me.

I was brought what was necessary, and I set about discharging my Commission.

In Half an Hour's Time my Supper being almost in a Condition to be put to the Fire, I perceived that I wanted Artichokes, whereupon I left a little Lacquais I had with me to take care of all, and I went myself to the Garden to get some.

The

The Garden was spacious, and the Number of Wall-trees, that bore very beautiful Fruit, excited my Curiosity to advance farther and farther to survey them, and see whether I could find any to my Taste. I pluck'd one, and seeing Cherries at a little Distance, I made towards them, and having eaten some, as I had Time enough to get ready Supper, I went to take a Walk under a Bower of Honey-suckle that exhaled a grateful Odour, at the Bottom of which was a very beautiful Summer-house, the Cieling whereof was embellished with curious Paintings between Fillets of Gold. The Door was close shut, but seeing a Window half open, I was desirous to look in, which I did, and I saw our Provincial, who held in his Arms the Lady of the House, whose Petticoat was tucked up so as to afford me the delightful Prospect of a Scarlet Stocking, neatly drawn on, a Garter accurately tied, and a Bit of plump Flesh as white as Alabaster. I retreated with Precipitation, not only through the Dread of being perceived, and having spoiled Sport, but also apprehending that my Curiosity might bring upon me some Fustigation, and I sought to keep myself concealed in some Part of the Grove, to wait the Issue of this Story, and the Provincial's coming forth

forth. But another Adventure happened to me ; for passing into a great Thicket, I observed the Father Secretary rise briskly, and advancing towards me all in a Sweat, he said in embracing me : Hah ! Brother *Leonorus*, how transported I am to see you here, come, partake of our Joys, and share in our Delights. At the same Time he took me by the Hand, and led me to the Place where the Gentleman's Sister was sitting, to whom he said, Miss, I am vexed to the Heart, that the too great Ardour of my Passion opposed your and my Desires ; you assuredly have Reason to be dissatisfied with me, but if I have failed to compleat your Wishes, I believe you will meet in Brother *Leonorus* wherewithal to content them. Retire, said she, as in a Passion, I should not have a Desire stirred up in me without seeing its Accomplishment ; in the Brother I hope to find Matter for a proper Satisfaction ; and your Presence serves only to retard the Pleasures I expect to taste with him.

He retired, and these Words having given me broad Hints of the Combat I was to engage in, my Arms were soon ready for the Charge, I mounted to the Assault, and behaved so gallantly, that the
young

young Lady confessed, she was exceeding glad of the Adventure, that had made me so opportunely take the Place of the Father Secretary. During these Transactions the Provincial came upon us: He was surprized to see me in a lascivious Posture, and he might well have fallen into a fainting Fit, very different from that which seized him undoubtedly in the Summer-house; he knew not how he should construe the Thing; but Miss having related the History how it happened, he laughed heartily, and said to me with a paternal Heart, Cheer up, dear Brother, proceed as you begun, this is a lovely young Lady, you must employ all your Strength to content her, and you must rejoice in the happy Occasion that has so unexpectedly presented itself.

Immediately after we returned to the House, where we found the Secretary extended on a Couch of Ease, who made the Master of the House believe, he found himself indisposed by some Fruit he had eaten. I hastened to get ready Supper, which all allowed was very nicely dressed; after which, we went to rest ourselves on good Beds 'till the next Morning. Having breakfasted, we took Leave of our Host and Hostesses, who prayed us not to fail to pass
by

by the House in returning, which we promised them to do. Afterwards we made the best of our Way to a Convent of Nuns of the Institute of *Fontevraux*, where my Conductors were going to perform a Nine-days Devotion, during which I was an Eye-witness of Things worthy of being recorded.

It is necessary to know that during the Devotions of these nine Days, they expressly forbid their spiritual Sisters to converse with any but themselves, that during these nine Days, their Attachment may be intire to what they ordain, and their Attention constant to their Discourses at the Grate, from whence they retire only at Meal-time, after which they return, and continue till Midnight, which is the Hour of Mattins.

We arrived in good Time at this Monastery, which was not far off the Castle where we had been so well entertained. As soon as these Ladies were informed of the Arrival of their Directors, they all repaired to the Parlour with such a Shew of Modesty, that I was at first astonished, not being accustomed to see this Species of Animals. In the Day-time they are usually together, and confer with each other on worldly Affairs, inquire after their Parents and

F

Friends,

Friends, and other such Things; but at Night, which is the Time appointed for Silence, they retire into little dark Parlours, where the Grates are large, to enjoy their Directors, the one after the other.

The Father Provincial did not treat me like a Novice, but as a Friend. He gave me full Liberty to walk wherever I pleased, without being obliged to amuse myself in saying my Beads, according to the usual Practice of the silly and stupid Companions of our Order. I therefore minded nothing but recreating myself during the Time that these good Fathers founded the Inclinations, and softened the Hearts of these young Ladies: I saw neither of them but at Dinner-time, because they did not sup at Night, on Account of the private Collations served every Evening at the Grate.

I was now two Days in this Convent, without any other Employment than that of walking about, when in the Morning of the Third, I met a Brother from *Paris*, who walked alone, and seemed plunged in profound Meditation. Being intimate Friends, I accosted him, and asked the Cause of his Melancholy; I am in Love, answered he, and I am concerting Measures for contenting this Love. If there
be

any Thing, replied I, in which I can be serviceable to you, employ me, and I will do it with all my Heart. I suppose, said he, you can be of no Manner of Service to me in this Respect; however, as we often want Understanding in the Things that concern us most, for which, those not interested in our Affairs may easily find Expedients, because they are not transported with the Passion that blinds us, I will disclose to you the Reason of my Discontent. I have been now eight Days in this Place with a Preacher, who came on the same Errand as the Father Provincial. We contracted an Acquaintance with three very lovely young Nuns, who desired to devote themselves intirely to the Pleasures of Love; but the Means to procure Contentment being difficult, because altho' the Grates be wide, it is impossible to do there what one wishes, they therefore bethought themselves of an Expedient, tho' somewhat dangerous, which notwithstanding was attended with Success. One of these Nuns was in Possession of the Keys of the Fish-pond belonging to the Convent; in this Pond there is a Grate for the flowing thro' of a little Stream to supply it with Water, and this Grate is opened or shut by a Lock and Key; she gave us the Key, and told us we were to pass that Way about Two

o' Clock in the Morning. Pursuant to this Advice, we went to reconnoitre the Place by Day, in order to examine whether we could enter there without Danger. These Precautions seemed necessary; we found the Water low, that there was nothing to risque, and that by tucking up our Gowns, and sliding along the Wall, we might easily pass without being seen by any one, upon Account of a great Wood in the Inclosure of the Convent, which afforded a thick Shade.

We came to the Place of Rendezvous at the Hour appointed, and there we found our three Darlings, who, in devout Plight, waited our Arrival. As they were prepared for the Thing, there was no Necessity for much pressing, tho' they swore they had never known Man. But a Dispute somewhat comical arose among them, because they were three, and we but two. There was one more moderate than the other two, or rather apprehensive that the Dispute would occasion the Loss of Time, said that she could willingly wait till her Friend had done, or that she would defer the Thing till the following Day. But she was not therefore the worst on't, for in all my Life I never found myself more vigorous, and after having made some Passes at the

first, I had Strength enough to afford unto her the Double of what I had given the other. I forgot to tell you that the Preacher had first seized upon the handsomest and youngest, for whom I conceived an ardent Passion, and I shall never be satisfied till I obtain from her the last Favour. This is the sole Cause of my Displeasure, and I have imbibed so strong an Inclination for the Possession of this beautiful Creature, that I am resolved to break rather with the Preacher, than not to content my Heart's Desire.

We have now continued, added he, for four Days together this Sport, yet all this while I could not have it in my Power to clasp in my Arms her whom I adore; and as I am obliged to depart on the Morrow, I was scheming, when you met me, how to accomplish my Design.

I am glad, answered I, that you have had this Confidence in me, as I can devise an Expedient to make you obtain the Object of your Wishes, provided you are willing to admit me into the Company. As to what depends of me, with all my Heart, replied he, but I must speak to the Father; yet how to open the Matter, and procure you Admittance, I am quite at a
Loss.

Lofs. On the contrary, said I, you must be silent in the Affair, or else your Enterprize will prove abortive ; shew me only the Place, and rely on me for the rest : Accordingly he shewed me the Place, and how I was to behave in passing, without being seen, and where I should find the pretty Nuns. The Matter being resolved upon, I did not fail to be at the Place before them. The three Nuns were already there, and asked where was the Father Preacher, taking me for the Brother. I answered them, with a very low Voice, that he followed me, and at the same Time I took one, and briskly set about my Work, that I might not be known before I gave the finishing Stroke. The Preacher and Brother came afterwards. The Brother had passed the first, as I gave Directions, and laid hold of her he loved ; so that the Preacher was obliged to take up with the third.

We spent two Hours as agreeably as could be, two of these young Nuns having been much better satisfied than before, each having her Paramour ; afterwards we retir'd, rallying the Preacher, who had been frustrated in his accustomed Prey, and who had no better Reasons to defend himself, than by assuring us that he had found the
last

last as good as the first. Having emptied an excellent Bottle of Wine, we cast ourselves each upon a Bed, and soundly slept till Ten o' Clock.

They went to take Leave of their spiritual Sisters of Pleasure, and after having dined, they told me they would be glad to pay their last Respects to the Father Provincial, because they designed to set out in an Hour's Time, that they might reach *Paris* the next Morning. I left them, to see the Father Provincial at the Grate, where he had dined that Day, desiring them to wait a little, and that I would soon bring them Word whether he was disposed to receive their Farewell, and give them his Benediction.

I went up Stairs to the Parlour of the Prioress, where he usually conversed with one or other of the Nuns. I opened the Door without knocking, tho' the contrary is punctually observed by Monks and Nuns: But I had so raised the Latch, that I did not well know what I was about. I beheld, on opening the Door, shall I dare say! our Reverend Father Provincial making Preparatives for conveying very luscious Ideas to the Imagination; he lay extended on his Back, upon the Shelf that was placed before

before the Grate; his Eyes full fraught with the Glances of amorous Passion, were eagerly fixt on one of the beautiful Nuns on the other Side, who displayed Charms not to be told, and whose Hand, to avoid Idleness, went through the ceremonious Part of a certain Office. This Spectacle surprized me so much, that I drew the Door after me with more Precipitation than I opened it, and ran in quest of the Secretary, without knowing why, or wherefore; my Head was so distempered with Wine, and what I had seen, that I rushed suddenly into the Parlour where he was, and broke the Bolts which he had the Prudence to keep the Door secured by, for fear of a Surprise. But if my Astonishment had been great on Sight of the Condition of the Father Provincial, that in which I found the Secretary was much worse. He was stretched on two Chairs, his Visage pale, his Cord loose about him, his Sandals at a Distance, his Gown carelessly raised, and a young Lady held him by the Hand across the Grate. I ran to succour him, but the Posture in which I saw the Lady as I approached, convinced me that he was only dead to partake of the Effects of a more pleasing Resurrection. She assured me that his Debility would be attended with no fatal Consequences. I left them together, to act as they thought proper

proper, and returning to those who waited for me, told them, that the Father Provincial wished them a safe Return to the Convent, and that he recommended himself to their holy Prayers, not having it in his Power to see them, upon Account of an important Affair he was engaged in. We drank the Stirrup-cup, I conducted them about half a League's Distance, and returned, to see if I could finish my Nine-days Devotion as well as I began, without troubling my Head about the Achievements of the Reverend Father Provincial, and the Father Secretary.

I contracted a greater Intimacy with our three pretty Gardeners, and every Night I repaired to the Rendezvous of the Fish-pond, where I tasted with these charming Nuns all the Delights of Love.

This agreeable Nine-days Devotion being concluded, we with Reluctance quitted, and steered our Course towards *Paris*. On the Road we turned in to see our beautiful Hostesses, who entertained us admirably well, and it was there the Sweets of our Journey ended. I heartily wished that it had continued longer; for what can one desire more than to have beautiful Women, dainty Cheer, and good Beds.

G

Being

Being arrived at *Paris*, I followed the Example of my Provincial, and sent to the Nuns certain Waters, to make subside the hydropical Humours which Love might have engendred. I could have wished that we had often returned to the same Place, or made elsewhere like Incursions ; but that not happening above twice in the Year, all I could do, was to insinuate myself into the Friendship of some Preacher, whom I might serve in Quality of Companion, when he should go to preach in some noted Convent. I was twice employed in this Office, but our Stay was so short, that unless one has formed an Acquaintance, as the Generality of our Fathers do, I could come at no other Pleasure than that of good Victuals and Drink.

I could alledge a thousand Examples of their Leachery, their Sacrileges, their debauching in Cloisters an Infinity of Virgins, and the Adulteries they daily commit in private Houses, was I not apprehensive by this Narrative of all their Infamies, to scandalize the chaste Ears of those who may read this little Work ; which I will finish with a little History, that shall prove the licentious and debauched Life of these Reverend Fathers, and shall take off the hypocritical Mask, by the Help of which they
abuse

abuse the Simplicity and Sincerity of those who entertain a favourable Opinion of their apparent Devotion.

One of the most illustrious of the Order by his Quality and Science, found Means by his Intrigues to have himself elected Guardian of the Convent of *Provins*, a City famed throughout *Christendom* for the Crimes committed by the *Franciscans*, with an Infinity of religious Women, whom they there debauched. This Reverend Father, who was Guardian in 1676, was the Origin, Chief, and Cause of the Desolation, Destruction, and all the ill Conduct of these poor Nuns. This Capuchin is as clever a Man as one could wish to see, and I may say that for a tall, well-proportion'd Body, and Length of Beard, he is inferior to none of the Order. His Wit is subtil and persuasive, and if his Memory had not failed him, he would undoubtedly have been one of the best and most esteemed Preachers of the Age.

As his Desire for the Office of Guardian was only to follow with Impunity the Suggestions of an unbridled Passion, without apprehending to be exposed to the Censure of any, he abandoned himself entirely to the Power of his Senses, neglected nothing

he thought instrumental to his Pleasures, placing his whole Study in concerting Measures to refuse nothing to his Satisfaction. To compass his Designs he made use of a Brother for a Companion, who had spent a Part of his Life in amorous Intrigues, who almost publicly professed Prostitution, and whose rare Talents in negotiating Matters of this Kind, made him always sought for by those who were addicted to this Vice. This I mention with a Kind of Certainty, because he made no Mystery of declaring himself, and it is to him that I am beholden for this Relation.

In Vintage-time having sent to gather Wine in the neighbouring Villages, he was desirous to know the Amount of what he hoped to have, that at the same Time it might be deposited in a Place of Safety, to send for it according as he should want. Traversing the Vineyards he saw a young Country Girl, about eighteen Years of Age, who cloathed tolerably well for one of her Condition, shewed forth a Beauty capable of effacing all the Charms of the Court. Our Guardian was smitten with her; this ravaging Wolf of the Pudicity of Virgins formed an immediate Design of proceeding to Possession, and to pave the Way for his pernicious Intention, he enquired

quired from whence she was, and to whom she belonged. She shewed him the House of her Father, where he speedily directed his Course to see the good Man, whom he prayed, with that hypocritical Air that seduced every one, to be pleased to let him have for some Time a Place wherein to lay up the Wine of his gathering. The honest Countryman, whose Judgement was confined to the Appearance of Things, thought it was by an Effect of the divine Benediction, that the good Friar applied to him; he granted his Request, believing his Soul to be as simple as his Cloathing, and that his sole View aimed at the gaining of Heaven. He therefore offered to him the Use of a Cellar, telling him that he might dispose of his House, and of all that belonged to him, praying him afterwards to take a Glass of Wine, to refresh himself, and to be pleased to accept of a small Collation. The Father-Guardian complying, they sat down to Table, where the Guardian, to keep in the honest Man's Favour, talked to him of holy Things, and in a familiar Manner, because it was necessary to suit his Discourse to the Peasant's Intellects, who verily believed that he entertained in his House an humanized Angel. Whilst still at Table, the Daughter entered, and presented him with a Cup of Wine

Wine by her Father's Orders. He was so transported by the Sight of her, that he scarce could refrain from declaring to her his Love, and it was not without great Violence to himself, that he did not give her a Specimen of it, and that he reserved himself for a more favourable Opportunity, which he hoped in Time to lay hold of, as it afterwards effectually happened.

He departed, promising that he would often visit them, which he did almost every Day. He amused the Father and Mother with fine Words, shewed Endearments to the young Children, made Presents to the Daughter, whose Friendship he gained, and so insinuated himself into the good Graces of the whole Family, that he made himself, as it were, Master of the House.

He passed so the Winter, yet his Affairs were not the more advanced: His Companion, as he himself told me, was not well satisfied with his Proceedings, upon Account of the great Expences he was at, but he dared not to expostulate the Matter with the Guardian, who declared to him his Intention, as judging he should want his Ministry to accomplish his Ends.

The

The Spring-time having turned about, these good Folks usually came on *Sundays* and Festivals to visit the Father-Guardian : He always received them with the greatest Testimonies of Friendship, regaled them in an elegant Manner, and to take away all Scruple from the young Girl of coming another Time unaccompanied to the Convent, he once invited the whole Family to dine there and see the House.

Several times he behaved in the same Manner ; but the Summer passed entirely without his finding a proper Opportunity for his Design. The Autumn, which is the Harvest season, was also that in which he gathered the Fruits of his amorous Labours. For this Purpose, he prayed the Girl to fetch him on a Day he had appointed, some Fruit that he knew was at her Home, of which he had none in the Convent, telling her, he would give her the choicest he had. She promised to do so, and the Day being come, he dispersed ten of his Monks in the Villages all around, and reserved only in the House one of his intimate Friends, and his Companion, the Accomplice of all his Wickedness.

The young Girl came about Four o'Clock, the Companion opened the Gate
for

for her, and said smiling; Step in, Sister, Step in; I'll go and acquaint the Reverend Father-Guardian that you are here.

The Girl made no Difficulty of entering; and the Brother pretended to go and ring the Bell for Complin, the better to leave no Room for Suspicion, and to avoid Scandal; though there were none to sing in the Choir.

The Guardian coming up to her, saluted her in a very loving Manner, saying, My pretty Creature, I have never a Basket to put my Fruit in, take the Trouble of going along with me, I will give you others in the Place of yours. She followed him without Resistance into his Chamber, where there was a nice Collation ready; and he had no great Difficulty in persuading her to eat and drink. There was excellent *Spanish* Wine, of which she drank copiously, and the two Friends that were there, after they had set her somewhat a going by plying her with Drink, retired according to the Guardian's Orders, who as soon as he saw himself *solus cum solâ*, set about executing what he had so long projected. He threw her by Way of Play on his Bed: At first she made a little Resistance, but as she was witty, amorous, and had got a little

Wine

Wine in her Head, she let the Guardian fulfil his Heart's Desire. He afterwards conjured her to continue with him that Manner of Life, and to come often to see him; which she did for the two Years he remained in that Convent, during which he did not deny his Companion a Share in the Conquest, as he himself told me.

Such are the crafty Wiles they have Recourse to, to content their lascivious Desires. The Cloak of Devotion serves to cover their Imperfections, their Words are edifying on certain Occasions, and their Actions give them the Lye. They appear to have pure Intentions, when their Hearts are the Common-sewers of Impurity, and it is Hypocrisy alone that favours their Vices. There are none among them but the Ideots and Simple, who do not abandon themselves to the Crimes the greater Part commit, and who would be more proper to make War after the *Italian* Manner, if they could but make easy Conquests, than to remain cloistered up in a State of Indolence; or if there be some Men of Understanding in this Institute, who are strictly religious, and not guilty of these general Depravations, it is a Kind of Prodigy, of which rarely is seen an Example, because they follow almost all, without Exception,

H the

the same Tracks, not contenting themselves to destroy entirely by their vicious Practices Poverty and Chastity, their two principal Vows, but also the last, which is that of Obedience.

Examples in this Respect, which are as so many Proofs to evince the Truth, are so frequent and so sensible, that they might well be Materials for a large Volume, which must necessarily tire out the Reader. I will touch here upon three or four, sufficient to establish this Truth.

Our Superiors, through a political Principle, send often by Dozens our Preachers into the Villages, to instruct the Peasants, who give us their Blood in the Vintage and Oil-times, or to gain the Affections of the Gentlemen who are the Lords of these Peasants. These Sorts of Missions seem not to them very glorious, nor capable of procuring them much Pleasure; they all obstinately stand out against them, send back from *Caiphas* to *Pilate*, or say they have got a Pain in the Stomach. But when an Octave is to be preached, or the Panegyric of some great Saint to be pronounced in a celebrated Convent of Nuns, not one then is led by the Ear, all aspire to go there, and the oldest, who are often
the

the most foolish, solicit so powerfully the Permission to exercise these Functions, that a poor Guardian is forced, contrary to his Inclinations, to yield to the Importunities of these vain Religious.

If they are sent to assist some sick Person, with an exprefs Order to return Home, they always pretend that their Help could not be dispensed with; but this was for some Object that flattered them more, than Charity for the Salvation of a Soul ready to quit this World.

The Motive of going to succour Persons, that exist only in the Imagination of these Friends of Voluptuousness, draws sometimes half of them out of the Cloister, who' the real Motive consists in nothing so much as the Desire to indulge their Spirit of Licentiousness. I speak as a Connoisseur, for twenty of us being one Day gone out, under Colour of assisting the Sick, fourteen fell in together at Supper in the Abbey of *St. Denis in France*, where the Hospitality of the *Benedictine* Monks always splendidly entertains us. It was in this famous Monastery, that conversing with him whose Care it is to receive Strangers, I learned to our Confusion, that contrary to the Order given us to be, if possibly we can, at the

Hours of the usual Refection of the Monks, in order to be less burdensome to them, our Brethren, who are better treated, and enjoy themselves with more Liberty in the Chamber for Strangers, than in the Refectory, tarry designedly an Hour or two under a Tree near the Road, to let the Time of the Monk's Refection pass, and to wave Obedience to the Command that so formally enjoins us to strive to join them in the same Refectory. This is what this good Brother assured me he was a thousand times Witness of.

Formerly the General-Superiours had prohibited, under Pain of formal Disobedience, the Use of Coco-beads, or of perfumed Wood, Cords of a fine Texture knotted in a new Manner, Gold, or curious Medals, and a hundred other Trinkets of Value, that had a manifest Tendency to alter the Vow of Poverty; but perceiving that it was only labouring in vain, and that all indiscriminately were industrious in the Acquisition of these rich Baubles, they gave themselves no farther Trouble about the Matter, chiefly for fear of prejudicing themselves in the Minds of their Inferiors, because their proud Humour could not consent to divest themselves of the Love of these Things, which they

they glory in, and which, it seems, is a Kind of Characteristic to distinguish them from the Simple and the Dregs of the Convent.

It is certain that the Spirit of Obedience is so much extinguished among us, that a Guardian never hazards the commanding of any Thing, without being very sensible that his Commands will be received by him on whom they are imposed.

The greater Part of the Ancients, who, to rid themselves of the Yoke of Obedience, go out as they list, to betake themselves where Voluptuousness calls them, are never disposed to follow any other Movement but of their Self-love. This Inclination is too well known to the Superiours, who notwithstanding connive at it, their Government being only for three Years, after the Expiration of which Time, they are glad to enjoy as others their Liberty.

It would be unnecessary to add here, that among us each Person lives in Independency, and according to his Caprice. One should, for some Time have made Profession of Capuchinagism, or should be very familiar with us, to be convinced by
our

our Dissatisfactions and Murmurings, of
the little Account we make of the Vow of
a Blind Submission. Those who may take
the Trouble to read this ingenuous Con-
fession I make of our Practices, ought to
acknowledge me too sincere, to doubt of
the truth of my testimony.

This is what I had to say for the Dis-
charge of my Conscience with Regard to
the Life and Conduct of my Brethren. I
hope to be pardoned for the little Order and
Connection I have observed in these Me-
moirs, and that so much Justice will be done
me, by allowing, that a Man of no Let-
ters, who only follows the Impetuosity of
his Zeal for detecting Falsehood, could
scarce be more regular, exact, and con-
nected.

as a world how can it be known to
be a villainous guiding principle only for those
who are not governed by only for those
of which Time, and the other their

and the of necessity to add here
shall in each lives in Inde-
pendence. All I can say is
God forbid, for some Time have made
I should be of Consequence, or should be
by which it is to be convinced by
our